



Redcoats Review

Celebrating the 139th Anniversary of the Battle of Maiwand

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

I send warm greetings to all our Redcoats Members. Changes to the museum staff have now taken place and the Trust Manager (formerly known as the curator) Tony Field has settled in well. Simon Cook left for retirement in January. We have a new assistant curator, Bethany Joyce, who again has settled in extremely well and she has made many improvements to the visitor experience. Unfortunately the new restaurant contractor is not yet in place, but it is hoped that they will start operating by September. They have already delivered a number of event catering facilities for customers, however, so we are getting to know them. The coach house building has been refurbished outside with new windows and main entrance, and work starts for the improvements inside, in July.

We have just had a successful AGM with 30 members attending and there was approval for a grant donation to the museum for the purchase of a new interactive kiosk and a linked large display screen to go into the entrance corridor. This will be the main part of the annual special exhibitions and displays and it is hoped that this facility will attract more visitors into the museum as a result. Although the large cost expected to pay for this will severely deplete our account, I am still confident that after two to three years we can build up our reserves so that we can continue to be able to offer support for further small grant requests.

At the AGM we had a short report on the recent Society led battlefield tour to France and Belgium last year covering WW1 events, given by Martin McIntyre. Andy Steel, the tour guide and organizer, proposing the next tour, which is scheduled to take place in September 2020, followed this. This next tour will concentrate on WW2 events, mainly centred in Normandy. Later in the year we will be calling for individuals to sign up for the tour and details will be promulgated accordingly.

The museum staff are attending a number of outside events in the summer, such as the National Armed Forces Day event at Hudson's Field, Salisbury and in addition to volunteers helping out at the museum stand, we will have our new banners on display supporting this. Our Society autumn event has been postponed for a while until we have the new catering facilities available and it may be that we will delay any future talks and events until the following year.

As ever I am grateful to the committee members for all their hard work and in particular to Martin McIntyre and Michael Cornwell for producing the newsletters to such a high standard. I hope you enjoy reading this.

Editorial Team's Additional Comment. At the AGM The Chairman alluded to the distinct possibility of his undertaking another role within the RWMT. So on everyone's behalf we take this opportunity to thank Nigel for all he has done for the Society to date.



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TIMELY NEWS ITEM CONNECTED WITH THE 139TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF MAIWAND

It never surprises us regarding what information still surfaces many years after the event. The story that unfolds below shows one such incident and thanks to perseverance of a then young collector who over the years brought his research to satisfactory conclusion for himself yet opened another avenue of information for the 66th Regiment of Foot and our Museum.

Very recently our newly installed Trust manager, Tony Field, received an email from Mr John Devonport relating to a Maiwand connection. It read :-

"Dear Curator, When I was 15 years old I went into an old antiques shop and saw an 1850s pattern infantry officers sword. I fell in love with it and paid in instalments over a few weeks to buy it. I later noticed it had a family Crest and the initials WJDBP on the blade. Research proved the sword once belonged to Lieutenant-Colonel William John De La Poer Beresford-Pierse of the 66th (Berkshire) Regiment. I have owned the sword for 50 years now, longer than the original owner. I have done something today which I have wanted to do since I bought it. I took it to Bedale in Yorkshire to visit his family seat at Bedale Hall and then to his grave to reunite the sword with Colonel Beresford-Pierse for the first time in 102 years".

Mr Devonport attached several images which have been added to the Museum's Photographic Archive.

Here we see an image W. J. De La Poer Beresford-Pierse in the rank of Major



As Captain W.J. De La Poer Beresford-Pierse, he was present at the Battle of Maiwand in 1880 and may have owed his survival to the fact that he was Officer in Charge of the baggage train. Whilst the museum has a couple of images of him we also have two interesting artefacts that he recovered. One from the battlefield and the other from the battlefield of Kandahar which took place in September 1880, where Ayub Khan was defeated. If you go to the Museum website and search under "The Collection" using the numbers, 5197 and 5199 separately you will find the items. One being a Japanese design coffee cup and saucer which was reputedly used by Ayoub Khan just before the action at Kandahar in 1880 and was found by Lieutenant Beresford Pierse afterwards apparently still with warm coffee in them. The other being a Silver casket with embossed lid. It belonged to Lieutenant Colonel Galbraith who was killed at the Battle of Maiwand with items inside (2 brass buttons 66th Berkshire Regiment and 2 silver coins - see items 5201, 5202 and 5203).



To the left an image of John Devonport, with the sword he bought, at the grave side of Lieutenant Colonel W. J. De La Poer Beresford-Pierse, thus reuniting the original owner with his sword, albeit temporarily. To the right a memorial to both Lt Col and Mrs Beresford-Pierse in the church at Bedale, Yorkshire. Mr John Devonport has indicated that at the appropriate time he will donate the sword to the Museum.



TRIBUTE TO VIVIAN HOWARD RIDLEY MBE QGM

Born in 1932 Vivian Howard Ridley was called up to begin his National Service as a Rifleman in the Kings Royal Rifle Corps but his leadership potential saw him being sent to the War Office Selection Board (WOSB) and on passing entered the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst to commence his officer training. Commissioned in 1953 into the Wiltshire Regiment accounts in the Regimental journal show that from the outset Vivian was a thoroughly professional officer, with a good sense of humour and a liking for fast cars. The latter seeming to be common feature with the Subalterns at Le Marchant Barracks, Depot of the Wiltshire Regiment..

Suffice to say Vivian's career followed the usual path of officers in that he spent his early years between serving with the 1st battalion and the Depot. During his career he served in West Africa, Pakistan (Staff College at Quetta), and Canada with the Regiment he served in Cyprus, Malta, Minden, British Honduras, Ballykinler. Whilst he was Battalion Second in Command in Ballykinler he was awarded a well deserved MBE. He went on to command 3rd Battalion The Worcestershire and Sherwood Forester Regiment (3 WFR). Post command he spent 4 months as part of the British element of the Commonwealth Force taking part in Operation Agila, the Monitoring Force overseeing the peace transition between the Southern Rhodesian Government and the Zimbabwean Patriotic Front. It was for services in this operation that Vivian was awarded the Queen's Gallantry Medal.

Vivian left the Regular Army in 1986 and became the Assistant Regimental Secretary of the Regiment, working here in the Wardrobe, and took the opportunity to rebadge back to his parent regiment, having initially to change on assuming command of 3 WFR. Vivian remained in that post until 1994 when the Regiment amalgamated with the Gloucesters to form the RGBW.

1994 saw Vivian become a volunteer in the Museum, working as a member of the Front of House team and he was also for a time the Chairman of the Society of Friends of the Redcoats. Vivian continued as a member of the Front of House team until failing health led Vivian himself to make the decision to step down in 2014, having given 20 years of his retirement to the Museum. Sadly Vivian passed away on 2nd February 2019

In trying to produce a suitable obituary for the Regimental Journal, I wanted to include the circumstances that led to the award of the Queen's Gallantry Medal, Vivian himself being to self deprecating and passing it off with flippant remarks. By going to the National Archives and searching their data base I found and obtained the citation for his award. It makes remarkable reading and shows the quality of Vivian, and although he was cap badged as a member of another regiment when he was awarded the QGM, Vivian was always a Wiltshire/DERR man at heart. His citation reads as follows:

“Lt Col Ridley was employed in Rhodesia as the Lieutenant Colonel Commissioner with the Patriotic Front in the most volatile and tough operational area of the country. He was required to set up and operational HQ with a senior Patriotic Front Liaison officer (PFLO) and to control four RV points and two Assembly Places.

During the assembly phase from 28 December to 10 January, Lt Col Ridley displayed initiative and courage of quite exceptional order. The area to the south west of Umtali was reported by the Rhodesians to be full of large hard-line guerilla groups. With his PFLO he went time and again into the bush, even on one occasion after dusk, to make contact with these groups and persuade them to report to the RVs and Assembly Places. Not only were many of the tracks he used mined but, in the view of the Rhodesians, he was certain to be shot. Both these facts he knew full well but, with total disregard for his own safety, he saw it as his duty to act as he did in order to ensure that the assembly phase in his area was a success. On one of his journeys his PFLO, unaccountably disappeared but, undeterred, Lt Col Ridley continued to his destination down a track which subsequently turned out to be mined and made contact with an aggressive guerilla commander. Not only did he persuade him to bring in his group but he also tended to, and evacuated, a wounded guerilla, who he drove back down the mined and almost certainly ambushed tracks to Umtali.

His outstanding personal courage must have ultimately become recognised by the guerrillas themselves because, in the areas where he operated, and despite transport being blown up on a mine with many resulting casualties, the assembly phase was a major success with one RV point taking in over 2000 men and Assembly Place Foxtrot, with its 6000 guerillas, being nearly three times the size of any other in the country.

After the Assembly phase was complete. Lt Col Ridley was immediately present in the Assembly Places under his command whenever a tense or threatening situation occurred, as it often did. Again it was his personal courage and selfless disregard for his own safety which saved one situation after another and overcame the handicap of having a volatile and aggressive drunk as his PFLO. Throughout the operation he never spared himself. He took his life in his hands again and again. The example of courage he displayed was an inspiration not only to his subordinates but also to the Rhodesian and even to the Patriotic Front Guerillas themselves. The results he achieved by this extraordinary gallant behaviour speak for themselves and he richly merits an award.

The second page of the citation appears below, the front cover of the citation shows that the initiating officer was Brigadier J H Learmont OBE Deputy Commander Monitoring Force Rhodesia . The supporting remarks from Major General John Acland, Commander Monitoring Force Rhodesia are "I have full personal knowledge of this case and recommend it very strongly indeed".

CITATION
(To be completed by Initiating Officer)

BACK Army Form W3121
(Revised)

A. Recommended in respect of—

(a) RECOMMENDATION

(b) RECOMMENDATION

(c) RECOMMENDATION

(d) RECOMMENDATION

(e) RECOMMENDATION

(f) RECOMMENDATION

} Detail all descriptions not applicable.

B. Action or service for which recommended—

(1) Place RHODESIA

(2) Date of action or period covered by the citation DECEMBER 1979 - MARCH 1980

(3) Name of post LIEUTENANT COLONEL COMMISSIONER (PATRIOTIC FRONT-ZANTLA)

(4) Other detail—

1. Lt Col Ridley was employed in Rhodesia as the Lieutenant Colonel Commissioner with the Patriotic Front in the most volatile and tough operational area of the country. He was required to set up an operational HQ with a senior Patriotic Front Liaison officer (PTLO) and to control four RV points and two Assembly Places.

2. During the assembly phase from 28 December to 10 January, Lt Col Ridley displayed initiative and courage of a quite exceptional order. The area to the south west of Umtali was reported by the Rhodesians to be full of large hard-line guerrilla groups. With his PTLO he went there and again into the bush, even on one occasion after dark, to make contact with these groups and persuade them to report to RVs and Assembly Places. Not only were many of the tracks he used mined but, in the view of the Rhodesians, he was certain to be shot. Both these facts he knew full well but, with total disregard for his own safety, he saw it as his duty to act as he did in order to ensure that the assembly phase in his area was a success. On one of his journeys his PTLO unfortunately disappeared but, undeterred, Lt Col Ridley continued to his destination down a track which subsequently turned out to be mined and made contact with an aggressive guerrilla commander. Not only did he persuade him to bring in his group but he also tended to, and evacuated, a wounded guerrilla who he drove back down the mine and almost certainly released tracks to Umtali.

3. His outstanding personal courage must have ultimately become recognised by the guerrillas themselves because, in the areas where he operated, and despite transport being blown up on a mine with many resulting casualties, the assembly phase was a major success with one RV point taking in over 2000 men and 400 Assembly Place Patrols, with its 6000 guerrillas, being nearly three times the size of any other in the country.

4. After the assembly phase was complete, Lt Col Ridley was immediately present in the Assembly Places under his command whenever a tense or threatening situation occurred, as it often did. Again it was his personal courage and selfless disregard for his own safety which saved one situation after another and overcame the handicap of having a volatile and aggressive drunk as his PTLO. Throughout the operation he never spared himself. He took his life in his hands again and again. The example of courage he displayed was an inspiration not only to his subordinates but also to the Rhodesians and even to the Patriotic Front Guerrillas themselves. The results he achieved by this extraordinarily gallant behaviour speak for themselves and he richly merits an award.

* The period covered by the citation must be completed as accurately as possible.

DEFENCE SECRETARIAT No. 1/74 1211

A young Lieutenant Vivian Ridley



One other aspect of Vivian's work as a Member of the Friends and as volunteer of the Museum we should be grateful for is his editing and getting ready for publication was the unfinished work by John Hill's on his book "Slim's Burma Boys".

We missed Vivian's wit and zest for life once he stood down as a volunteer but were reminded of it during the eulogy given by his son Stephen at the funeral.

OPERATION BANNER

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BRITISH ARMY'S DEPLOYMENT TO ULSTER

For those of us involved with the initial deployment of C Company 1DERR on 26 August 1969, it is incredible to realise we were in the van of what was to become the British Army's the longest campaign.

The 1st Battalion Duke of Edinburgh's Royal Regiment [Berkshire and Wiltshire] was deployed to Northern Ireland from the outset in August 1969 and served in the Province with distinction for the next 30 years. The regiment were deployed and had a footprint in Ulster in the first three years of what became known as 'The Troubles'.

'C' COMPANY 1969

In August 1969 the Regiment was deployed throughout the world in British Honduras [Now Belize] and Malaysia leaving the one remaining Company in Catterick which was 'C' Company. They together with the Drums Platoon were ordered to Londonderry at very short notice to reinforce the 1st Battalion Queens Regiment. Although they did not know it at the time the tour was to last for four months until December. They were based at the Duncreggan Territorial Army centre and started operating on nine days out and three days in rota. Initially the situation was grim with soldiers sometimes sleeping in the streets. The company was involved in all forms of urban internal security duties and in particular in manning check-points and carrying out foot patrols. They took part in a number of crowd dispersal operations, which included several major riots in the Diamond area of the old city. They were welcomed at the start, but by the end of the tour the atmosphere was changing for the worst.



Lt Col Tom Gibson briefing an element of C Company 1DERR before they depart Alma Barracks Catterick Garrison for Londonderry. The officer standing behind the sitting troops is Lt R K Tittle, OC 9 Platoon

A Section of 9 Platoon, commanded Corporal Woolen, facing one element of the sectarian divide to stop them getting at their opponents. Perhaps the beginning of "The atmosphere £ changing.



'B' COMPANY 1970

The following year 'B' Company were to have a short but very violent deployment - In June 1970 'B' Company and the Drums together with a troop from 14th Light Regiment, Royal Artillery, were dispatched at short notice to Belfast to reinforce the Royal Scots. The company commander, Maj. Godwin-Austen, later remembered *'On the morning of the 3rd July we conducted Lord Balniel, the Defence Minister, around our company area in an atmosphere of relaxed euphoria and bonhomie. Friendly Irish neighbours gave our patrols tea and sandwiches. By nightfall we were locked in a gun battle with snipers in which at least five civilians were killed and nearly 800 rounds of 7.62 ammunition were fired by British troops.* The violent situation started after a search of a house in Balken Street for arms and ammunition by the Royal Scots and RUC (Royal Ulster Constabulary) in which fifteen pistols, one rifle, a Schmeisser sub-machine gun and a quantity of ammunition and explosives were found. This find sparked off some of the bloodiest rioting that the Province had seen to date. By the end eighteen soldiers were suffering from gunshot and grenade splinter wounds, five civilians died and 300 people were detained, and for the first time an area of Belfast had been placed under military curfew. 'B' Company was involved in serious rioting in the Falls Road area of Belfast, in the course of which several men were injured by gelignite bombs. In the operations that followed an officer and two soldiers of the Gloucestershire Regiment were shot and wounded. During this period 'B' Coy expended 488 CS cartridges, 64 CS Grenades and several rounds of 7.62mm ball ammunition. Suddenly at the far end of the street a double decker bus appeared. The rioters commandeered it, drove it towards the company and finally placed it across the road about 30 yards in front of them. There was a pause during which they prepared to move forward to the area of the bus. Suddenly without warning, there were a series of shattering bangs in and around them. Soldiers were blown backwards, and they thought they were at the wrong end of grenades – and they were! All together they had seven bombs thrown at them. With this new development the platoons scattered to a tactical deployment against the walls of buildings. Eight members of 5 Platoon were injured, three having been dragged from the ranks giving a clear indication of the scale of the ferocity. The two most badly injured were Sergeant Potter (later awarded a Queens Commendation) and Private Fern'.

Editor's Comment: We reported on Sergeant Brian Potter's award in the March Newsheet



B Coy deployed in
Belfast 1970

1st BATTALION 1971

In 1971 the Battalion was the 'spearhead' Battalion and on stand-by for deployment anywhere in the world to protect British interests. On 22 April that year the Battalion was dispatched to Londonderry, remaining until 28 May. They were based in an empty factory in Drumahoe just outside Londonderry. During the short deployment the Battalion conducted operations in Tyrone, Fermanagh and Antrim, with 'C' Company detached for a brief period in the city of Londonderry under the command of the 2nd Parachute Battalion. This tour was relatively peaceful with a few minor finds to their credit. On the 28th May the Battalion returned to Catterick to prepare for its move to Berlin. Thus, the Battalion had an involvement in the first three years of 'The Troubles'.

THERE MAY BE AN OCCASION WHEN SOME SOLDIERS DO NOT HEED THE ADVICE “NEVER VOLUNTEER”

Martin McIntyre, being the inveterate investigator of military history snippets relating to the Royal Berkshire Regiment or any of their antecedent regiments, unearthed the following story from the Imperial War Museum film archives and then found a collaborating article in the Royal Berkshire Regimental Journal “The China Dragon”

Japanese War Criminals executed - Burma 1946

After the Second World War the 2nd Battalion Royal Berkshire Regiment were based in Burma [They still had to complete their overseas 18 years commitment despite the war]. It was there they took part in the aftermath of the Far East version of the Nuremberg War Trials. As with the executions of the Germans convicted of war crimes, the end was filmed. The battalion was involved in one such firing squad.

The background to this was the The Kalagon Massacre which occurred in July 1945, when the population of the village of Kalagon (near Moulmein) was murdered. Some 600 people were shot or bayoneted and their bodies dumped in the village wells. The Japanese had apparently suspected them of harbouring British troops.

In Rangoon Central Jail, Burma, three convicted Japanese war criminals were executed for their part in the Kalagon Massacre.

The three prisoners, named on the film dope-sheet were Captain Yanagizawa Iamui, Lieutenant Tajima Ichiro and Captain Midorikawa Hisashi, are led out under guard:-

“They are tied to stakes; as they are secured they can be seen to shout 'banzai'. Closer shot of one of the condemned being secured. The three men, hooded, as a medical officer affixes an aiming point to their chests. Closer shot of medical officer affixing aiming point; he has a stethoscope around his neck. Medium wide shot showing the firing squad in the aim; they fire, the men sag at their stakes and the firing squad lay down their rifles. Shot of the medical officer checking one of the condemned; he appears to have also been shot in the head (probably by the Deputy Provost Marshal)”.

The cameraman's dope-sheet identifies the firing squad as being drawn from 2nd Battalion Royal Berkshire Regiment.

The Regimental Journal recorded :-

When volunteers were asked for, over seventy stepped forward, many of them being men who had fought in Burma and knew something of the Jap atrocities. That afternoon the party paraded with rifles and drove to Rangoon Goal. A practice had to be carried out under a provost officer, to ensure that the drill was fully understood.

The place chosen was an overgrown and derelict courtyard, one side of which was the prison wall. On arrival there, after marching through the prison, the party was met by the D.A.P.M. He ran through the procedure, pointing out the three stakes up against the prison wall and the firing point, a wooden structure with sandbags on top about four feet from the ground.

Two mornings later, not long after first light, the party marched on to the firing point, halted, grounded arms and filed off behind a wall thirty yards distant. The rifles were then loaded, one out of each section of ten having had the bullet extracted and tightly compressed paper substituted in the cartridge.

Five minutes later the sentenced men were marched in by C.M.P.s and were led to the three stakes, where they were tied by the ankles, knees and waist. They were dressed in uniform and were holding their heads up, apparently quite unconcerned. Suddenly just before the white hoods were placed over their heads, a word shout went up, answered by hundreds more echoing through the great prison. They were giving their last war cry.

Soon the hoods were on, a white disc placed over the heart and the C.M.P.s joined the small party of official spectators and pressmen.

On a given signal the firing party filed silently into position, and took up their arms, placed them on the rest, pushed forward the safety catches and took aim. The D.A.P.M. lowered his arm, the short sharp word of command

THE COLOURS PROJECT

For some time Martin McIntyre has been beavering away trying to find out what has happened to the various stands of Colours presented to our all of our Regiments and it is proving a challenging task, even for such a determined individual whose has previous experiences as a soldier and a detective. Those of you who wish to find out more of those sleuthing skills should contemplate coming on the Normandy Battlefield tour in 2020, where the guide, Andy Steele, may for a small consideration, spill the beans. However I digress. What follows is a short article from Mac on one such stand of Regimental Colours.

Return of the 66th (Berkshire) Regiment colours

Most of us believe that when our old regimental colours are laid up in the designated church, they are from that point safe. There they will be allowed to slowly turn to dust 'as the men who served under them have done'. Sadly in Reading that is not the case where a number of our regiments Colours have gone missing. However due to the sharp eyes and foresight of Major Robin Wilson who whilst in Brock barracks a number of years ago examined a plastic carrier bag and discovered within the remains of some old regimental colours. He took the remains into safe custody and a subsequent investigation carried out by Major Wilson and Colonel Vernon Powell established that they had discovered the remains of the 66th Regiments Colours presented in Quebec in 1851 and carried until 1872 in India. These colours were laid up in St Mary's church Reading with due ceremony in 1877. There the story should have ended. At some point someone removed the Colours leaving the brass plaque attached to the wall. Who removed them and when, remains a mystery.

Major Wilson then took steps to frame the remains in order to preserve them. This was followed by a significant amount of communication by Colonel Vernon Powell with the church authorities in Reading to return what remained of the colours to their rightful resting place. Eventually a small service was conducted in St Mary's where the remains were returned. Over the following months visits were carried out in the church to ascertain if the Colours were going to be displayed. Unfortunately this never happened and it appears the church authorities were not happy for them to be returned as framed. Further communication took place until it was decided that the remains of the Colours would be returned to the Regimental Museum at the Wardrobe in Salisbury. On the 26th June, 2019 Colonel Vernon Powell and Major Robin Wilson took a trip to Reading, retrieved the framed Colours and duly returned them to the museum in Salisbury where it is hoped in the passage of time they will be displayed.



Colours of 66th Regiment of Foot from 1851 to 1871 returned to the Regimental Home by Major Robin Wilson and Col Mike Vernon-Powell (not in the photo). Martin McIntyre is nonchalantly posing as if he is largely responsible for the return.

FRIENDS RECRUITING DRIVE AT DERR@60

During the weekend 7-10 June 2019 some 450 former members of the Duke of Edinburgh's Royal Regiment and their wives/partners took over the Warner's Lakeside Holiday Village on Hayling Island. Your committee felt that this might be an ideal opportunity to drum up new membership for the Society of Friends. Prior to going Tony Field, the Trusts new Secretary/ Manager had purchased a mobile credit/debit card reader. So Museum shop sales could be when museum staff went to off base display venues.

The organising committee and Warner's agreed to let us use the small cinema to set up our recruiting area, so armed with the wherewithal to carry out card transactions as well as the old traditional cash sales we emptied the Museum shop of all the DERR regimental stock and sallied forth for Hayling Island. As well as the shop stock a looped PowerPoint presentation of over 390 images of individuals or groups of DERR soldiers and or their families with background music playing.

The shop element attracted many of the 450 regimental attendees, and we were able to hand out the Society leaflets which added to the free copy of the latest Friends Newsheet each chalet was provided with.

To drive the message home the Museum is the home of all the infantry regiments who have and continue to recruit from our two counties we even commissioned a pull poster, which will accompany volunteers at future off site venues. The great success story was the card reader and we now have the ability to attend county family history.

Was the venture successful, well we increased the shop sale by some £900 but we will have to wait and see the next AGM report to see if we have gained new members from this venture, but it was too good an opportunity to miss.



A somewhat untidy volunteer with the Society of Friends new Recruiting Screen on its initial outing at the DERR@60 Reunion

FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS

Proposed Battlefield trip to Normandy, September 2020

Following the success of the battlefield tour to the Western Front last year (reported in previous newsletter) where we followed the fortunes of the Royal Berkshire Regiment and the Wiltshire Regiment during the Great War it has been proposed that we conduct a similar trip to Normandy in September 2020. It will cover the actions of the 5th (Hackney) battalion Royal Berkshire Regiment on Juno beach on 'D' Day. Followed by the actions of the 4th and 5th Battalions of the Wiltshire regiment who as part of the 43rd Wessex Division fought in a number of actions shortly after D day and beyond. *(It is worth mentioning that a significant number of soldiers from the 5th Berkshires after D day reinforced both the Wiltshire battalions who had sustained many casualties.)*

As briefed by Andy Steele at the AGM, the present plan will be to firstly cover the Crossing of the River Seine by the Wiltshire Regiment and work back towards Juno Beach, covering the major actions for our Regiments. Whilst this will mean we will be covering the actions in reverse order it actually makes logistical sense for the group not only in terms of travelling but in accommodation terms as well.

If anyone is interested, please register an initial expression of interest at this stage with no commitment. We intend to hold a planning meeting in September this year after which we will be able to give the relevant dates, itinerary, and possible cost (based on the numbers pledged to attend). Shortly after that point we will be seeking firm commitments. If it's a runner at that stage a reconnaissance will be carried out on the ground, and the research necessary to conduct a meaningful trip will take place. We will be asking if any person taking the trip would like a personal visit, let us know early so the relevant research can be carried out.

The main regimental areas of interest are Juno beach, the crossing of the River Seine (Vernon), Hill 112, Maltot, Mont Pinçon, and other actions and relevant locations. The U.S. landings at Omaha, the Ox and Bucks at Pegasus Bridge and lots more.

Our tour guide will be Andy Steele from Reading who conducted our last tour with great success.



Our Chairman having checked up on the suitability of Messrs Steele and McIntyre as Battlefield Tour Guide can thoroughly recommend them both

BUDDING SUBSCRIBERS?

Anyone who has a particular topic that they would like to have included or a story that they wish to recount please get in touch with either Mac or me.

Mac's email address is

Researcher2@the wardrobe.org.uk

My email address is

Researcher3@the wardrobe.org.uk

Museum's Facebook :

See the foot of this main page.

The Society of Friends of
The Rifles, Berkshire &
Wiltshire Museum,

The Wardrobe

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CRIE DE COEUR

Can you fill this man's Shoes



Not all of our membership may necessarily be aware that we are looking for a new Chairman of the Society of Friends. Those who attended the last AGM will be aware of the probability of our excellent chairman, Nigel Walker, assuming a greater role in the upkeep of the whole of the Wardrobe site.

When that happens, Nigel will have to step down as Chairman

So, if any of our readers would like to recommend a suitable replacement or indeed volunteer themselves for the post, can they please get in touch with Nigel directly.

Editor's Comments: I should apologise to members for the paucity of material in comparison to previous editions. By way of explanation I will say that in another role as Chairman of the Regimental Association I have lost a sterling Association Secretary with the death of Mike Godwin. Regrettably no-one has yet come forward to take up the reins he so ably handled. That added to being on the committee of the DERR@60 and trying to produce the Association contributions to the Bugle has taken most of my attention. I sincerely hope things will return to a norm .

Finally I would like to include in future editions a column of letters to the Editor, so that you the readers may have a chance to have your say.

CAN YOU RECRUIT ANOTHER MEMBER?

We are always looking to recruit new members, and a good method of advertising is by each of us spreading the good word ourselves . So please think about passing this Newsletter one to friends relations etc. Application forms to become members can be found on :

www.thewardrobe.org.uk

Your web page on the Museum web site is:

<http://www.thewardrobe.org.uk/museum/contact-us/support-us/friends-events-and-publications>

If you want to join us on Facebook the link is:

<https://www.facebook.com/The-Rifles-Berkshire-and-Wiltshire-Museum-500832510060892/>